Center for Immigration Studies

Backgrounder

November 2002

Immigrants in the United States — 2002

A Snapshot of America's Foreign-Born Population

By Steven A. Camarota

An analysis by the Center for Immigration Studies of the Current Population Survey (CPS) collected in March of this year by the Census Bureau indicates that 33.1 million immigrants (legal and illegal) live in the United States, an increase of two million just since the last Census. The March CPS includes an extra-large sample of minorities and is considered one of the best sources for information on persons born outside of the United States — referred to as foreign-born by the Census Bureau.[1] For the purposes of this report, foreign-born and immigrant are used synonymously.[2] The questions asked in the CPS are much more extensive than those in the decennial census, and therefore it can be used to provide a detailed picture of the nation's population, including information about welfare use, health insurance coverage, poverty rates, entrepreneurship, and many other characteristics. The purpose of this *Backgrounder* is to examine immigration's impact on the United States so as to better inform the debate over what kind of immigration policy should be adopted in the future.

Among the reports findings:

- There is no evidence that the economic slowdown that began in 2000 or the terrorist attacks in 2001 have significantly slowed the rate of immigration. More than 3.3 million legal and illegal immigrants have entered the country since January of 2000.

- By historical standards, the 33.1 million immigrants living in the United States is unprecedented. Even at the peak of the great wave of immigration in the early 20th century, the number of immigrants living in the United States was only 40 percent of what it is today (13.5 million in 1910).

- Immigrants account for 11.5 percent of the total population, the highest percentage in 70 years. If current trends continue, by the end of this decade the immigrant share of the total population will surpass the all time high of 14.8 percent reached in 1890.

- Immigration has become the determinate factor in population growth. The arrival of 1.5 million immigrants each year, coupled with 750,000 births to immigrant women annually, means that immigration policy is adding over two million people to the U.S. population each year, accounting for at least two-thirds of U.S. population growth.

- Although immigration has a very large effect on the overall size of the U.S. population, it has a much more modest effect on the age structure in the United States. The nearly 16 million immigrants who arrived in the United States since 1990 have lowered the average age in the United States by only four months.

- The percentage of immigrants without a high school diploma is 30 percent, more than 3.5 times the rate for natives. Since 1990, immigration has increased the number of high school dropouts in the labor

Dr. Camarota is the Center for Immigration Studies' Director of Research.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

force by 21 percent, while increasing the supply of all other workers by 5 percent.

- The poverty rate for immigrants and their U.S.-born children (under 18) is two-thirds higher than that of natives and their children, 17.6 percent versus 10.6 percent. Immigrants and their minor children now account for almost one in four persons living in poverty.

- The proportion of immigrant-headed households using at least one major welfare program is 24.5 percent compared to 16.3 percent for native households.

- One-third of immigrants do not have health insurance — 2.5 times the rate for natives. Immigrants who arrived after 1989 and their U.S.-born children account for 95 percent (7.5 million) of the 7.8 million increase in the size the uninsured population since 1989.

- The low educational attainment and resulting low wages of many immigrants are the primary reasons so many live in poverty, use welfare, and lack health insurance, not their legal status or an unwillingness to work.

- Immigration accounts for virtually all of the national increase in public school enrollment over the last two decades. In 2002, there were 9.7 million school-age children from immigrant families in the United States.

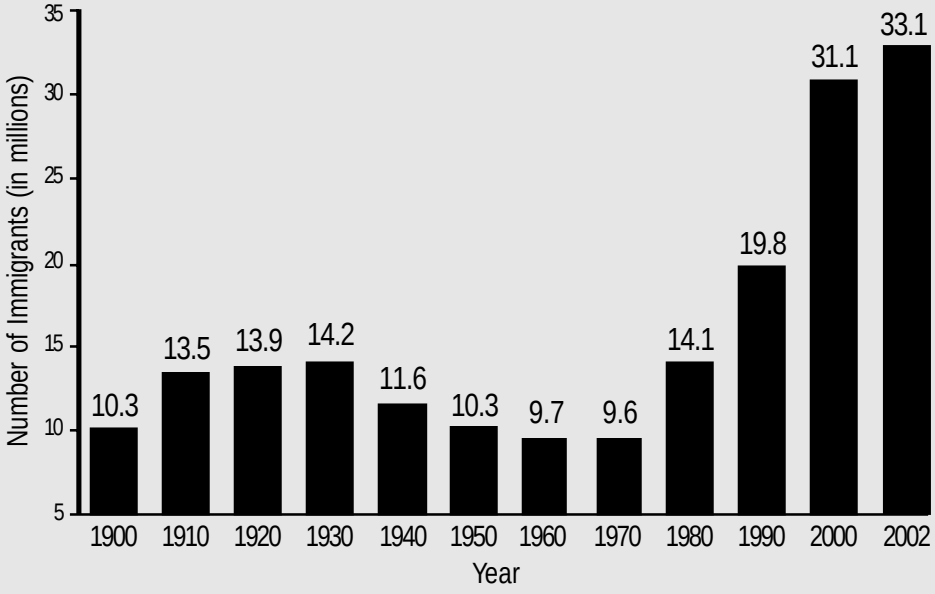
- In 2002, 39.2 percent of immigrants 18 and older were citizens and they comprised 6 percent of all eligible voters.

- Immigrants and natives exhibit remarkably similar rates of entrepreneurship, with about 1 in 10 being self employed.

Table 1. Immigrants as a Percentage of U.S. Population

1900	13.6 percent
1910	14.7 percent
1920	13.2 percent
1930	11.6 percent
1940	8.8 percent
1950	6.9 percent
1960	5.4 percent
1970	4.7 percent
1980	6.2 percent
1990	7.9 percent
2000	11.1 percent
2002	11.5 percent

Figure 1. Immigrant Population: 1900-2002



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Because the CPS is primarily designed to gather data on people in the workforce, it does not include those living in "group quarters," such as prisons and nursing homes. However, it is possible to arrive at a total immigrant population of 33.1 million simply by adding the roughly 600,000 immigrants found to be living in institutions by the preliminary 2000 Census results to the 32.5 million immigrants in the CPS.[3]

Because all children born in the United States to immigrants are by definition natives, the sole reason for the dramatic increase in the immigrant population is new immigration. While some immigrants die and others return home, the issuance of 800,000 to one million permanent residency visas annually and the settlement of hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens each year greatly exceeds deaths and out-migration. The immigrant population in the CPS includes perhaps eight to nine million illegal aliens and 900,000 persons on long-term temporary visas, such as students and temporary workers.

In any discussion of immigration's effect on the country it is important to keep in mind that the number of legal immigrants allowed in each year, the selection criteria used, and the level of resources devoted to controlling illegal immigration are all discretionary policies of the federal government. Thus the numbers discussed in this report represent a policy choice, one that does not have to continue into the indefinite future. It is also important to note that given the sampling and non-sampling error that exists in any survey, the results in this *Backgrounder* for states and immigrant groups with relatively small populations should be interpreted with caution.

Table 2. Six Methods for Estimating Immigration's Impact on U.S. Population Growth, 2000 to 2002, Using the CPS (Thousands)

		U.S. Pop. Growth, 2000-2002[1]	Immigration Component	Births to Immigrants 2000-2002[2]	Share of U.S. Pop. Growth
1.	**Immigrant Arrivals, 2000-2002[3]**	5,116	2,960	-	57.9 Percent
2.	**Immigrant Arrivals, 2000-2002, Plus Births to These Immigrants[3]**	5,116	2,960	81	59.4 Percent
3.	**Immigrant Arrivals, 2000-2002, Plus Births to All Immigrants[3]**	5,116	2,960	1,475	86.7 Percent
4.	**Growth in Foreign-Born Population, 2000-2002[4]**	5,116	2,035	-	39.8 Percent
5.	**Growth in Foreign-Born Population, 2000-2002, Plus Births to 2000-2002 Immigrants[4]**	5,116	2,035	81	41.4 Percent
6.	**Growth in Foreign-Born Population, 2000-2002, Plus Births to All Immigrants[4]**	5,116	2,035	1,475	68.6 Percent

[1] Based on comparison of 2000 Census with March 2002 Census Bureau estimate of resident population, which can be found at http://eire.census.gov/popest/data/national/tables/NA-EST2001-04.php

[2] The1,475,000 figure is for births to all immigrants between April 2000 and March 2002, including immigrants who arrived prior to April 2000. The 81,000 figure is only for children born to immigrants who themselves arrived 2000-2002. All figures are only for children who resided in the United States as of March 2002.

[3] The 2,960,000 figure is for those who arrived 2000-2002 based on the year of arrival indicated in the CPS, excluding those who arrived in the first quarter of 2000 because these immigrants should be in the 2000 Census figures.

[4] Based on a comparison of the foreign-born population in the 2000 Census and the March 2002 CPS, with 600,000 added to the 2002 CPS to reflect the foreign-born population in group quarters not covered by the CPS. The 600,000 figure is based on the preliminary results of the 2000 Census. However, a comparison of the (reweighted) March 2000 CPS and the Census indicates that there are 1.1 million immigrants in group quarters not captured by the CPS, we use 600,000 to be conservative in our estimate of the growth in the immigrant population 2000 to 2002.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Historical Comparison

While immigration has played an important role in American history, the level of immigration and the size of the immigrant population have varied considerably. Figure 1 shows the number of immigrants living in the United States over the course of the last 100 years. The 33.1 million immigrants residing in the United States in 2002 are by far the most ever recorded. Even during the great wave of immigration at the turn of the century, the immigrant population was less than half what it is today.

Table 1 shows that after growing in the early part of this century, the immigrant population stabilized at around 10 or 11 million for about four decades. In the mid-1960s, changes in immigration law and other factors caused the annual level of legal immigration to rise steadily, from about 300,000 in the 1960s to nearly a million today. As a result, between 1970 and 1980 the number of immigrants living in the United States grew by 47 percent or a record 4.5 million people. Reflecting the continuing increase in legal and illegal immigration, the immigrant population grew by 5.7 million (40 percent) in the 1980s — another record — and by 11.3 million (57 percent) in the 1990s, again surpassing the previous record. The latest data indicate that this rapid growth has continued into the first decade of the 21st century, adding another two million in just the last two years. The foreign-born population's growth rate in every decade since 1970 has been higher than at any other time in history, far surpassing the 31 percent increase between 1900 and 1910.

Unlike in the past, the growth in the immigrant population now accounts for a large share of the increase in the size of the U.S. population. Even during the

Table 3. Rank of States by Number of Immigrants (Thousands)

State	Total Pop.	Imm. Pop.	1990s Imms.[1]	2000-2002[1]	State	Total Pop.	Imm. Pop.	1990s Imms.[1]	2000-2002[1]
1) Calif.	34,488	9,118	3,199	673	**27)** Kan.	2,642	156	66	27
2) N.Y.	18,827	3,957	1,478	296	**28)** N.M.	1,804	137	48	4
3) Fla.	16,348	3,008	1,081	357	**29)** Ind.	6,036	136	58	17
4) Texas	21,065	2,995	1,231	329	**30)** Mo.	5,525	135	49	16
5) N.J.	8,470	1,563	612	152	**31)** R.I.	1,043	132	40	12
6) Ill.	12,331	1,338	557	118	**32)** La.	4,390	130	44	30
7) Ariz.	5,316	851	304	130	**33)** Okla.	3,382	130	43	17
8) Mass.	6,322	793	279	115	**34)** S.C.	4,009	128	52	30
9) Md.	5,326	677	288	108	**35)** Ky.	3,996	94	58	12
10) Va..	7,105	629	280	87	**36)** Idaho	1,315	93	41	8
11) Wash.	5,930	592	232	99	**37)** Ala.	4,388	82	43	15
12) Penn.	12,102	569	213	55	**38)** Ark.	2,657	80	29	8
13) Mich.	9,892	557	228	53	**39)** D.C.	554	72	32	7
14) Ga.	8,289	483	283	18	**40)** N.H.	1,258	72	28	5
15) Colo.	4,410	445	212	98	**41)** Neb.	1,683	64	24	5
16) Ohio	11,191	400	133	70	**42)** Alaska	634	50	18	5
17) Nev.	2,135	386	150	36	**43)** Del.	791	39	15	3
18) N.C.	8,098	381	212	60	**44)** Maine	1,279	35	8	3
19) Conn.	3,392	359	100	50	**45)** Miss.	2,799	33	11	8
20) Ore.	3,462	315	145	47	**46)** Vt.	607	19	4	2
21) Minn.	4,922	239	101	30	**47)** W.Va.	1,772	17	3	3
22) Wis.	5,336	223	79	29	**48)** Mont.	892	12	5	2
23) Hawaii	1,213	191	61	14	**49)** S.D.	739	11	5	1
24) Utah	2,262	175	84	18	**50)** N.D.	621	10	5	2
25) Tenn.	5,682	174	95	17	**51)** Wyo.	488	10	5	0
26) Iowa	2,861	157	83	29	**Nation**	**282,082**	**32,452**	**12,454**	**3,330**

[1] Based on response to the year of arrival question in the CPS.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

first decade of the last century, the 3.2 million increase in the size of the immigrant population accounted for only 20 percent of the total increase in the U.S. population. In contrast, the 11.3 million-increase in the immigrant population from 1990 to 2000 accounted for 35 percent of U.S. population growth in the 1990s. And the two million increase in the size of the immigrant population just since the last Census accounted for 40 percent of the 5.1 million increase in the U.S. population in the last two years.[4]

Immigration now accounts for such a large percentage of population because the fertility of natives was much higher in the early 1900s. As a result, the U.S. population a century ago grew regardless of immigration. Today natives have only about two children on average, with the result that immigration now accounts for a very large share of population growth. Also in contrast to the past, a much higher percentage of today's immigrants remain in the United States rather than returning home. Because so many immigrants in the early 20th century eventually returned to their home countries, immigration at that time did not add permanently to the overall size of the U.S. population in the way that it does today.[5]

While the number of immigrants and the growth rate of the immigrant population are higher now than at any other time in the last 100 years, Table 1 shows that the foreign-born percentage of the population was higher in the first few decades of the 1900s, reaching 14.7 percent of the total U.S. population in 1910. As a result of World War I and changes in immigration law in the early 1920s, the level of immigration fell significantly. The 1930 Census was the last time the percentage of immigrants was as high as it is today.

In terms of the impact of immigrants on the United States, both the percentage of the population made up of immigrants and the number of immigrants are clearly important. The ability to assimilate and incorporate immigrants is partly dependent on the relative sizes of the native and immigrant populations. On the other hand, because absolute numbers also clearly matter, a large number of immigrants can create the critical mass necessary to foster linguistic and cultural isolation. Whether the immigrants in question represent 10 percent or 30 percent of a city or state's population may not be so important; it's the raw numbers that would seem to matter most, and the numbers are already well over twice what they were in 1910. Moreover, absent a change in policy, the number of immigrants will continue to grow rapidly for the foreseeable future.

Population Growth

The CPS can be used to provide insight into the impact of immigration on the size of the U.S. population. Table 2 reports six different methods using the March 2002 CPS to estimate the effect of immigration on U.S. population growth since the last Census. The first column in Table 2 shows the growth in the U.S. population based on a comparison of the total

Table 4. States Ranked by Percentage of Population Made Up of Immigrants

State	Percent Immigrants	State	Percent Immigrants
1) Calif.	26.4	**27)** Iowa	5.5
2) N.Y.	21.0	**28)** Del.	4.9
3) N.J.	18.5	**29)** Minn.	4.9
4) Fla.	18.4	**30)** N.C.	4.7
5) Nev.	18.1	**31)** Penn.	4.7
6) Ariz.	16.0	**32)** Wisc.	4.2
7) Hawaii	15.7	**33)** Okla.	3.8
8) Texas	14.2	**34)** Neb.	3.8
9) D.C.	13.0	**35)** Ohio	3.6
10) Md.	12.7	**36)** S.C.	3.2
11) R.I.	12.7	**37)** Vt.	3.1
12) Mass.	12.5	**38)** Tenn.	3.1
13) Ill.	10.9	**39)** Ark.	3.0
14) Conn.	10.6	**40)** La.	3.0
15) Colo.	10.1	**41)** Maine	2.7
16) Wash.	10.0	**42)** Mo.	2.4
17) Ore.	9.1	**43)** Ky.	2.4
18) Va.	8.9	**44)** Ind.	2.3
19) Alaska	7.9	**45)** Wyo.	2.0
20) Utah	7.7	**46)** Ala.	1.9
21) N.M.	7.6	**47)** N.D.	1.6
22) Idaho	7.1	**48)** S.D.	1.5
23) Kansas	5.9	**49)** Mont.	1.3
24) Ga.	5.8	**50)** Miss.	1.2
25) N.H.	5.7	**51)** W.Va.	1.0
26) Mich.	5.6		

Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

population as enumerated in the 2000 Census and the March 2002 population estimate prepared by the Census Bureau. The first three rows of Table 2 use the number of immigrants who arrived in the United States in the last two years as the basis for estimating the impact of immigration on U.S. population growth. This method is possible because the CPS asks foreign-born persons what year they came to the United States. In 2002, 3.33 million immigrants in the Survey indicated that they had entered the country in 2000, 2001 and the first three months of 2002. Because those who arrived in the first three months of 2000 should have already been counted in the 2000 Census we reduce the 3.3 figure by 370,000 or three months worth of immigration to account for those who arrived in the first quarter of 2000. It is reasonable to view the 2.96 million immigrants who arrived in the last two years as the basis for estimating immigration's effect on population growth because this flow reflects current U.S. immigration policy — both legal immigration and the level of resources devoted to controlling illegal immigration.

Method One in Table 2 shows that the 2.96 million figure is equal to 57.9 percent of U.S. population growth. Of course, immigrants do not just add to the population by their presence in the United States. Immigrants also have children. Method Two shows that if the 81,000 births in the United States to immigrants who arrived between 2000 and 2002 are added to 2.96 million then immigration accounted for 59.4 percent of population growth since the last Census. Method Three shows that the immigration share of population growth is even larger if births to all immigrants between 2000-2002 are counted. The nearly 1.5 million births to immigrants in the last two years plus the 2.96 million immigrants who arrived in that time period is equal to 86.7 percent of U.S. population growth.

Methods Four, Five, and Six use the growth in the foreign-born population to estimate the impact of immigration on U.S. population growth. The immigrant population grew by roughly two million in the last two years. Although the CPS shows that three million immigrants entered the country in the last two years, the foreign-born population does not grow by this amount because each year some immigrants die and others return home. Method Four shows that the two million increase in the foreign-born accounted for almost 40 percent of population growth in the last two years. Method Five shows that adding the 81,000 births to immigrants who arrived in the last two years to the increase in the foreign-born population accounted for 41 percent of total population growth and Method Six shows that the growth in the foreign-born plus births to all immigrants in the last two years accounted for almost 69 percent of population growth. Taken together, the estimates in Table 2 make clear that no matter what assumption is used, immigration policy has very significant implications for U.S. population growth.

Table 5. States Ranked by Increase in Immigrant Population, 1990-2002 (Thousands)

	2002 CPS	1990 Census	Number Increase	Percent Increase
All States	32,452	19,767	12,685	64
1) Calif.	9,118	6,459	2,659	41
2) Texas	2,995	1,524	1,471	96
3) Fla.	3,008	1,663	1,345	81
4) N.Y.	3,957	2,852	1,105	39
5) N.J.	1,563	967	596	62
6) Ariz	851	278	573	206
7) Ill.	1,338	952	386	41
8) Md.	677	313	364	116
9) Va.	629	312	317	102
10) Ga.	483	173	310	179
11) Colo.	445	142	303	212
12) Nev.	386	105	281	268
13) Wash.	592	322	270	84
14) N.C.	381	115	266	231
15) Mass.	793	574	219	38

Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes. Figures for 1990 are from the census, which does include group quarters.

State Data

Table 3 ranks the states by the size of their immigrant populations. It also shows the number of immigrants who reported arriving in the 1990s and between 2000 and 2002. California clearly has the largest immigrant population; New York, the state with next largest number of immigrants, has fewer than half as many. Table 3 also shows how concentrated the immigrant population is: Only a few states represent the vast majority of the foreign-born population. The more than nine million immigrants in California

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

account for 28 percent of the nation's total immigrant population, followed by New York with 12 percent, Florida and Texas with 9 percent each, New Jersey with 5 percent, and Illinois with 4 percent. Despite having only 40 percent of the nation's total population, these six states account for 68 percent of the nation's immigrant population.

Table 4 ranks states by the percentage of their populations composed of immigrants. While the rankings by "percent immigrant" are similar to those in Table 3, there are some significant differences. Because of their relatively small total populations, several states, such as Hawaii and Nevada, with high percentages of immigrants, rank lower in terms of number of immigrants.

Table 5 compares the 1990 Census counts of the immigrant population with the March 2000 CPS and ranks the top 15 states by the numerical increase in their immigrant populations. While the states that had large immigrant populations in 1990 continue to account for most of the growth in the immigrant population, Table 5 shows substantial growth in the foreign-born populations in such states as Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina, and Nevada. The table also shows that immigrants have become somewhat less concentrated in the last 12 years. In 1990 the top six states accounted for 73 percent of the total immigrant population, but by 2002 these states accounted for 68 percent of the total foreign-born population in the United States.

Immigration and State Population Growth

In many states across the country, congestion and overcrowding have become very significant issues and it is important to determine the extent to which immigration policy may be contributing to these problems by significantly increasing the size of state populations. Table 6 examines the role of immigration in the 15 states experiencing the largest increases in population. The first column in Table 6 reports population growth between 2000 and 2002 by state. Columns 2 and 3 show the number of immigrants in

Table 6. Immigration's Estimated Impact on Population Growth in the Fastest-Growing States, 2000-02, Using the CPS (Thousands)

				Two Methods for Estimating Immigrantion's Impact on Population Growth	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
State	Pop. Growth, 2000-2002[1]	Arrivals, 2000-2002[2]	Births to Immigrants 2000-2002[3]	2000-2002 Arrivals as a Share of Population Growth	2000-2002 Arrivals Plus Births to Immigrants
California	872	599	470	68.7 Percent	>100.0 Percent
Texas	659	293	172	44.4 Percent	70.5 Percent
Florida	596	318	111	53.3 Percent	71.9 Percent
Georgia	268	16	38	6.0 Percent	20.2 Percent
Arizona	247	116	61	46.8 Percent	71.5 Percent
North Carolina	190	53	31	28.1 Percent	44.4 Percent
Colorado	164	87	19	53.2 Percent	64.8 Percent
Nevada	151	32	11	21.2 Percent	28.5 Percent
Virginia	146	77	27	53.0 Percent	71.5 Percent
Washington	139	88	25	63.4 Percent	81.4 Percent
Maryland	112	96	19	85.8 Percent	100.0 Percent
New Jersey	97	135	44	> 100.0 Percent	> 100.0 Percent
Illinois	81	105	60	> 100.0 Percent	> 100.0 Percent
Oregon	77	42	20	54.3 Percent	80.3 Percent
Minnesota	72	27	8	37.1 Percent	48.2 Percent
Nation as a Whole	5,116	2,960	1,475	57.9 percent	86.7 Percent

[1] Based on a comparison of 2000 Census with state population estimates carried forward to March 2002. The state population estimates can be found at http://eire.census.gov/popest/data/states/populartables/table01.php

[2] The figures are for those who indicated that they arrived in the country between 2000 and 2002, excluding those who arrived in the first quarter of 2000 because these immigrants should already be in the 2000 Census figures.

[3] Figures are for births to all immigrants between April 2000 and March 2002, including immigrants who arrived prior to April 2000.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Table 7. Region of Birth for Immigrant Population (Thousands)[1]

	Number	Percent of Imm. Pop.	Cohorts				
			Pre-1970	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-02
All Countries	32,454	100.0	4,109	4,604	7,962	12,449	3,330
Mexico	9,659	29.8	652	1,350	2,389	4,254	1,014
Canada	713	2.2	305	79	96	178	55
Cent. America	2,160	6.7	83	252	752	895	178
Caribbean	3,108	9.6	543	521	826	1,030	188
S. America	2,021	6.2	197	253	493	788	290
Europe	4,547	14.0	1590	594	606	1,351	406
E. Asia	5,752	17.7	476	975	1,771	1,982	548
S. Asia	1,746	5.4	31	178	386	855	296
Middle East	963	3.0	89	203	243	340	88
Sub-Saharan Africa	607	1.9	12	45	120	306	124
Not Reported/Oceania	1,173	3.6	128	153	278	472	142

[1] Values have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

Table 8. Top 25 Immigrant Countries of Birth in 2000 and Citizenship Rate (Thsnds.)[1]

	Number	Percent of Imm. Pop.	Citizenship Rate	Year of Entry[2]				
				Pre-1970	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-02
1) Mexico	9,659	29.8	19.4	652	1,350	2,389	4,254	1,014
2) China/Taiwan/HK	1,448	4.5	50.7	137	187	368	607	149
3) Philippines	1,429	4.4	64.9	136	293	488	431	81
4) India	1,305	4.0	34.2	30	145	276	608	246
5) Cuba	920	2.8	60.6	344	136	165	213	62
6) El Salvador	869	2.7	24.4	17	102	332	358	60
7) Vietnam	819	2.5	56.5	13	164	264	319	59
8) Korea	757	2.3	42.2	59	157	241	215	85
9) Canada	713	2.2	42.4	305	79	96	178	55
10) Dominican Rep.	653	2.0	36.6	67	119	195	241	31
11) Germany	636	2.0	60.6	370	60	52	120	34
12) Great Britain	605	1.9	49.9	237	93	104	104	67
13) Haiti	569	1.8	31.9	29	73	189	231	47
14) Colombia	539	1.7	34.6	49	74	122	217	77
15) Jamaica	532	1.6	44.7	47	102	161	199	23
16) Russia	507	1.6	53.3	38	49	68	305	47
17) Poland	471	1.5	50.4	116	48	90	177	40
18) Japan	439	1.4	26.0	87	42	49	132	129
19) Guatemala	407	1.3	21.4	11	38	125	185	48
20) Italy	405	1.2	70.6	267	67	21	41	9
21) Ecuador	359	1.1	30.9	44	59	78	147	31
22) Honduras	288	0.9	23.0	14	19	88	134	33
23) Iran	281	0.9	54.8	12	79	88	79	23
24) Ukraine	255	0.8	39.6	31	9	29	152	34
25) Pakistan	248	0.8	37.9	0	30	64	123	31
All Others	7,341	22.6	41.8	997	1,030	1,820	2,679	815
Total	32,454	100	36.9	4,109	4,604	7,962	12,449	3,330

[1] Values have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
[2] Based on responses to year of entry question in the March 2002 CPS.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Table 9. Characteristics of Immigrants and Natives in the Workforce[1]

Education	Natives	All Immigrants	Year of Entry[2] Pre-1970	1970-79	1980-89	1990-2002	Immigrant Pct. of Category
Less Than H.S.	7.6 %	30.3 %	17.3 %	27.6 %	29.3 %	34.6 %	40.6 %
H.S. Only	32.4 %	24.9 %	25.6 %	22.6 %	25.8 %	25.1 %	11.6 %
Some College	30.0 %	16.7 %	22.6 %	18.9 %	19.1 %	13.1 %	8.7 %
Bachelor's	20.2 %	17.7 %	18.8 %	20.0 %	17.2 %	16.8 %	13.0 %
Graduate or Professional	9.8 %	10.4 %	15.6 %	10.8 %	8.6 %	10.4 %	15.4 %
Median Annual Earnings	$31,200	$24,000	$33,000	$30,000	$25,000	$20,000	-
Average Age	41	39	53	45	39	32	-

[1] Analysis confined to persons 18 and over in labor force who worked a full-time schedule at least part of 2001.
[2] Based on responses to year of entry question in the CPS.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

Table 10. Concentration of Immigrants Across Occupations and Other Socio-Demographic Characteristics[1]

Occupations	Pct. Imm.	Average Wages	Pct. of Workforce	Pct. of Imms.	Pct. of Natives	Pct. of Blacks[2]	Pct. of Whites[3]	Total Workers (Thsnds.)
Total Workforce	14.6	$38,558	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	120,900
Low-immigrant Occupations	**11.6**	**$44,150**	**72.9 %**	**57.8 %**	**75.5 %**	**60.1 %**	**78.4 %**	**88,195**
Managerial and Professional	10.6	$51,125	32.4 %	23.4 %	34.0 %	22.9 %	36.6 %	39,175
Technical, Sales, Administrative Support	10.5	$34,887	27.2 %	19.5 %	28.5 %	29.1 %	28.1 %	32,912
Farming Managers, Forestry and Fishing	9.6	$14,461	1.0 %	0.6 %	1.0 %	0.3 %	1.2 %	1,192
Precision Production, Craft and Repair	17.0	$32,884	12.3 %	14.3 %	12.0 %	7.8 %	12.5 %	14,916
High-immigrant Occupations	**22.8**	**$23,478**	**27.1 %**	**42.2 %**	**24.5 %**	**39.9 %**	**21.6 %**	**32,705**
Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers	20.3	$26,142	14.3 %	19.8 %	13.3 %	19.9 %	12.2 %	17,257
Service Occupations, Not Private Household	23.0	$21,287	11.1 %	17.4 %	10.0 %	18.9 %	8.3 %	13,391
Farming, Except Managerial	42.2	$15,686	1.4 %	4.1 %	1.0 %	0.9 %	0.9 %	1,707
Service Occupations, Private Household	44.3	$13,902	0.3 %	0.9 %	0.2 %	0.2 %	0.2 %	350

[1] Persons in labor force 18 and over, employed full time for at least part of the year.
[2] Figures are for native-born non-Hispanic blacks.
[3] Figures are for native-born non-Hispanic whites.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the state who arrived 2000-2002 and births to immigrants over that time period. Column 4 uses the number of immigrants who arrived between 2000 and 2002 to estimate immigration's impact on population growth, while column 5 uses recent immigration plus births to immigrants over the last two years to estimate immigration's impact on state population growth. Table 6 shows that using either assumption, there are a number of states in which immigration has had a very large impact on state population growth. In Texas, Florida, Arizona, Colorado, Washington, Virginia, and Oregon, immigration accounts for half or more of population growth. The table also shows that in states such as California and Maryland population would seem to have roughly stabilized but for immigration. This is important because both states are struggling to deal with ever-expanding populations.

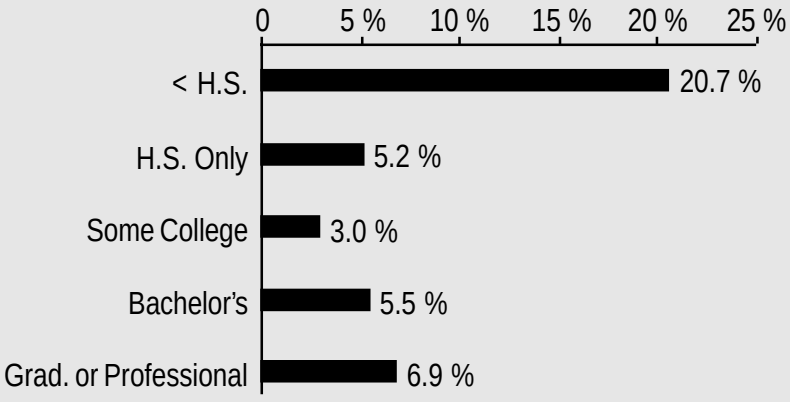
The table also shows that immigration is not the determinate factor in population growth in every fast-growing state. In Georgia, for example, new immigration and births to immigrant women account for about one-fifth of total population growth. In some states, such as New Jersey and Illinois, the findings in the table indicate that absent immigration, these states may have declined in population. This is because there is a significant out-migration of natives from these states. There is, however, both anecdotal and systematic evidence indicating that in high-immigration states some natives leave because they are adversely affected by immigration. In particular, less-skilled native-born workers may leave to avoid job competition, and some parents may leave high-immigration areas because of the strains it creates on public schools. Therefore, it is by no means certain that these states would have declined in population had there been no immigration. Overall, Table 6 shows that in most, but not all, of the states with the fastest growing populations, immigration has played a very significant role. This is important because where American citizens or legal immigrants already in the country choose to live is entirely up to them. However, future immigration is something that can be limited much more easily than movement within the United States by Americans. The findings in Table 6 suggest that reducing immigration would be very helpful to a number of states struggling to deal with rapidly increasing populations.

Region and Country of Origin

Table 7 shows the distribution of immigrants by region of the world, with Mexico and Canada treated separately. Mexico accounts for 30 percent of all immigrants, with 9.7 million immigrants living in United States, more than the number of immigrants from any other region of the world. Immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and East Asia make up the majority of immigrants, with 70 percent of the foreign-born coming from these areas. Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe make up a relatively small portion of the immigrant population, accounting for only 15.9 percent of all immigrants and only 13.9 percent of immigrants who arrived since 1990.

Table 8 ranks the top-25 immigrant-sending countries by the number of immigrants as of March 2002. Mexico is, of course, the largest sending country, accounting for more than five times as many immigrants as the next largest country, the combined total for China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. As is clear from Table 8, Latin American, Caribbean, and East Asian countries dominate the list of immigrant-sending countries, accounting for 15 of the top-25 countries and eight of the top 10.

Figure 2. Percentage of Each Educational Category Comprised of Post-1990 Immigrants[1]



[1] Figures are for persons 18 and over who worked full time for at least part of the year in 2001.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Labor Market Characteristics

Immigrants now comprise 14.6 percent of the nation's total workforce.[6] This is somewhat higher than the immigrant share of the total U.S. population (1.5 percent) because, in comparison to natives, a slightly higher percentage of immigrants are of working age. Table 9 reports educational attainment and other characteristics of immigrants and natives in the workforce. The table shows that in 2002, 30 percent of immigrants who worked full time at least part of the year did not have a high school diploma, and of those who arrived in the 1990s, the figure is 35 percent. In comparison, slightly less than 8 percent of natives lacked a high school education. This difference in the educational attainment of immigrants and natives has enormous implications for the social and economic integration of immigrants into America society. There is no single better predictor of economic success than education, and the fact that so many adult immigrants lack a high school degree means their income, poverty rates, welfare use, and other measures of economic attainment are likely to lag far behind natives. The table also shows that about the same percentage of immigrants and natives have graduate or professional degrees.

The large number of immigrants with low levels of education means that immigration policy has dramatically increased the supply of workers with less than a high school degree, while increasing other educational categories more modestly. The last column in Table 9 shows the portion of each educational category composed of immigrants. While immigrants comprise about 15 percent of the total workforce, they comprise more than 40 percent of the high school dropouts in the workforce. Figure 2 shows the share of workers in each educational category comprised of immigrants who arrived since 1990. The figure shows that recent immigration has fundamentally altered the supply of unskilled workers by increasing the number of dropouts in the workforce by 21 percent; however, recent immigration has increased the supply of workers in other educational categories by between 3 and 7 percent. This means that any effect immigration may have on the wages or job opportunities of natives will disproportionately affect less-skilled workers, who are already the lowest-paid workers.

Given the large proportion of immigrants with few years of schooling, it is not surprising that the income figures reported in Table 9 show that, as a group, immigrants have lower median incomes than natives. The annual median earnings of immigrants are only about 77 percent those of natives. And for the most recent immigrants, median earnings are only 64 percent that of natives. While as a group immigrants earn significantly less than natives, the income data by year of entry suggest significant progress over time. However, the earning data also indicate that it takes a very long time for immigrants to close the gap with natives.

Consider immigrants who arrived in the 1970s. The age data shown at the bottom of Table 9 indicate

Table 11. Self Employment for Employed Persons 25 and Older (Percent)

	Percent Self-Employed
Korea	26.5 %
Iran	24.6 %
Italy	20.3 %
Pakistan	19.4 %
Canada	19.2 %
Russia	18.9 %
Japan	15.1 %
Germany	13.1 %
India	11.8 %
China	11.1 %
Great Britain	10.9 %
Ecuador	10.6 %
Poland	10.3 %
Cuba	10.2 %
Ukraine	9.6 %
Vietnam	9.4 %
Colombia	9.2 %
Jamaica	7.3 %
Guatemala	6.7 %
Honduras	6.6 %
El Salvador	6.2 %
Mexico	5.9 %
Philippines	5.2 %
Dominican Republic	4.6 %
Haiti	3.6 %
All Others	11.8 %
All Immigrants	9.8 %
Natives	11.1 %
Immigrant Avg. Self-Employment Income	$19,476
Native Avg. Self-Employment Income	$22,231

Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Table 12. Poverty Rates for Natives and Immigrants

	In Poverty		In or Near Poverty[1]		Percent
	Percent	Number (Thsnds.)	Percent	Number (Thsnds.)	Adult Dropouts[2]
Dominican Republic	25.8 %	168	54.9 %	358	47.7 %
Mexico	24.4 %	2,351	61.5 %	5,932	64.8 %
Pakistan	24.1 %	60	39.4 %	98	10.6 %
Cuba	19.8 %	182	49.2 %	452	33.3 %
Honduras	19.8 %	57	52.8 %	152	52.7 %
Colombia	18.5 %	100	40.9 %	221	14.9 %
Guatemala	16.2 %	66	50.7 %	207	54.2 %
Korea	13.2 %	100	32.1 %	243	10.6 %
Vietnam	12.8 %	105	31.4 %	257	22.3 %
Japan	12.3 %	54	26.0 %	114	5.0 %
Haiti	12.0 %	68	47.2 %	267	30.3 %
El Salvador	12.0 %	104	42.0 %	364	58.6 %
Great Britain	11.7 %	71	23.6 %	143	7.7 %
China	10.6 %	154	32.0 %	464	14.9 %
Italy	10.4 %	42	37.0 %	150	37.3 %
Russia	10.1 %	51	25.8 %	131	8.5 %
Ukraine	9.8 %	25	30.7 %	78	9.7 %
Iran	9.6 %	27	31.3 %	88	11.2 %
Ecuador	8.9 %	32	39.8 %	143	35.1 %
Jamaica	8.3 %	44	32.2 %	171	25.4 %
India	8.2 %	107	19.7 %	257	8.3 %
Germany	7.1 %	45	21.3 %	136	9.1 %
Canada	6.0 %	43	18.2 %	130	15.1 %
Poland	5.1 %	24	26.3 %	124	19.7 %
Philippines	3.8 %	54	17.9 %	255	8.4 %
All Other Immigrants	14.6 %	1,074	34.4 %	2,517	18.8 %
All Immigrants	16.1 %	5,208	41.5 %	13,452	33.0 %
All Natives	11.1 %	27,702	28.7 %	71,527	13.0 %
Immigrants 18 and Over	15.0 %	4,398	39.7 %	11,673	-
Natives 18 and Over	9.3 %	16,775	25.4 %	45,805	-
Children (Under 18) of Immigrant Mothers[3]	23.3 %	3,118	53.2 %	7,114	-
Children (Under 18) of Native Mothers[4]	14.7 %	8,619	34.8 %	20,385	-
Immigrants and Their U.S.-Born Children (under 18)[3]	17.6 %	7,516	43.9 %	18,788	-
Natives Excluding U.S.-Born Children of Immigrants[4]	10.6 %	25,395	27.7 %	66,191	-
Total Population	11.7 %	32,911	30.2 %	84,979	-

[1] Near-poverty is defined as income under 200 percent of the poverty threshold.
[2] Percentage of persons 21 and older who have not completed 12 years of schooling.
[3] Includes all children (under 18) of immigrant mothers, including those born in the United States.
[4] Includes only the children (under 18) of natives. The U.S.-born children of immigrants are not included.
Note: Official government poverty statistics do not include unrelated individuals under age 15 (mostly foster children) and they are therefore not included in this table.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of the March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that these immigrants are, by 2002, on average older than natives in the workforce. Because greater workforce experience comes with age, one would expect this to translate into higher income. Despite this, the median income of immigrants who arrived in the 1970s is actually slightly below that of natives, even though they are on average older than natives and have been in the United States for more than 22 years. Only the cohort that arrived before 1970 had higher incomes than natives, which is expected given that they are much older than natives on average. In addition to their age, the higher income of immigrants who arrived prior to 1970 may reflect the fact that most were admitted under the pre-1965 immigration system, which tended to produce a more educated flow of immigrants relative to natives than do today's policies.

Although immigrants who arrived decades ago did eventually close the gap with natives, the fact that it took so long to do so means that their lifetime earnings are significantly less than those of natives. This has wide-ranging implications for the immigrants themselves and for the Social Security system, which is based on lifetime earnings. The program is partly redistributive in nature. Those who have lower incomes pay less in Social Security taxes, but receive payments upon retirement that are proportionately larger in comparison to their tax payments than is the case for more affluent taxpayers. Thus, adding large numbers of people with substantially lower life-time earnings could significantly weaken the Social Society system in the long-run.

In the short-run, it is often suggested that immigration is very helpful to society because it adds young workers who pay Social Security taxes. However, if there is any short-term benefit to the system it must be very small. While newly arrived immigrants are somewhat younger than natives, they still age just like anyone else. In fact, the average age of an immigrant in 2002 is 39 years, four years more than the average age of a native-born American (The age figures in Table 9 are only for those in the workforce). Even if one looks at only recent immigrants, the effect on the age structure is very small. The nearly 16 million immigrants who arrived in the United States since 1990 have lowered the average age in the United States by only four months.[7]

Table 10 shows the occupational concentration of immigrants and natives. The upper half of the table lists those occupations in which the immigrant component is less than or roughly equal to their proportion in the overall workforce. The lower half lists those occupations in which immigrants comprise a proportion larger than their representation in the workforce, henceforth referred to as low-immigrant and

Table 13. Use of Means-tested Programs by Head of Household's Nativity, by Year of Entry (Percent)[1]

			Year of Entry[2]			
Welfare Program	Native Households	All Immigrant Households	Pre-1970 Immigrant Households	1970-79 Immigrant Households	1980-89 Immigrant Households	1990-2002 Immigrant Households
Public Assistance[3]	1.6 %	2.3 %	0.7 %	2.0 %	2.9 %	2.7 %
Supplemental Security Income	3.9 %	4.5 %	6.6 %	5.9 %	5.6 %	2.1 %
Food Stamps	5.4 %	5.7 %	4.8 %	5.3 %	7.2 %	5.3 %
Medicaid	13.4 %	21.8 %	16.2 %	21.2 %	25.2 %	22.3 %
Public or Subsidized Housing	4.6 %	4.9 %	5.0 %	4.6 %	5.0 %	4.8 %
Percentage of Households Using Any of the Above	16.3 %	24.5 %	19.0 %	24.2 %	27.7 %	25.5 %
EITC Eligibility	16.6 %	28.8 %	12.7 %	24. 6 %	34.1 %	34.7 %

[1] Immigrant and native households defined by nativity of household head. Year of entry based on household head.
[2] Based on responses of household heads to the year of entry question in the March 2002 CPS.
[3] Includes TANF and General Assistance Programs.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

high-immigrant occupations, respectively. Given the low level of educational attainment of a large proportion of immigrants, it is not surprising that high-immigrant occupations are those that tend to require fewer years of education. For example, while immigrants make up 23 percent of those holding non-private household service jobs, such as janitor, security guard, and child-care worker, they comprise only 11 percent of individuals in managerial and professional jobs.

Table 10 reveals that only 25 percent of natives are employed in occupations that have high concentrations of immigrants. This suggests that most natives are not in competition with immigrants.[8] However, as Table 10 shows, high-immigrant occupations pay an average of only 53 percent of what low-immigrant occupations pay. Additionally, high-immigrant occupations have unemployment rates that tend to be significantly higher than low-immigrant

Table 14. Use of Means-Tested Programs by Head of Household's Country of Origin (Percent)

Country	Using Any Welfare Program	Public Assistance	Sup. Sec. Income	Food Stamps	Public or Subsidized Housing	Medicaid	EITC Eligibility
Dominican Republic	58.7 %	6.6 %	17.3 %	23.6 %	18.1 %	55.0 %	38.4 %
Mexico	35.7 %	3.7 %	3.4 %	8.9 %	4.5 %	32.9 %	49.3 %
Cuba	35.3 %	0.9 %	13.0 %	13.5 %	10.9 %	30.9 %	18.1 %
Haiti	32.6 %	2.6 %	7.8 %	5.7 %	11.7 %	24.3 %	43.9 %
Russia	31.1 %	3.1 %	10.2 %	12.4 %	10.2 %	27.6 %	5.3 %
Vietnam	30.9 %	5.8 %	10.7 %	8.5 %	5.9 %	29.0 %	29.3 %
El Salvador	30.1 %	2.1 %	3.6 %	3.9 %	6.3 %	25.7 %	45.3 %
Honduras	29.9 %	5.6 %	1.9 %	6.5 %	6.5 %	24.3 %	43.0 %
Colombia	28.4 %	1.5 %	4.4 %	2.5 %	5.9 %	24.0 %	28.3 %
Guatemala	28.2 %	4.2 %	2.8 %	6.3 %	2.8 %	25.4 %	32.4 %
Ecuador	27.8 %	1.5 %	5.3 %	3.8 %	5.3 %	25.8 %	35.6 %
Pakistan	25.8 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	2.2 %	23.4 %	33.0 %
Ukraine	25.0 %	1.9 %	8.3 %	8.3 %	8.3 %	22.0 %	18.3 %
Iran	23.1 %	4.3 %	8.5 %	4.3 %	4.3 %	22.2 %	15.4 %
Korea	20.9 %	1.5 %	11.1 %	5.2 %	6.2 %	19.1 %	19.7 %
Jamaica	19.3 %	2.2 %	4.8 %	3.3 %	5.9 %	15.6 %	31.6 %
Philippines	15.5 %	1.3 %	5.4 %	2.4 %	3.2 %	13.2 %	16.8 %
China	13.8 %	0.0 %	3.2 %	1.3 %	2.9 %	12.2 %	16.2 %
Italy	13.3 %	0.0 %	2.7 %	3.5 %	4.0 %	10.6 %	11.9 %
Poland	11.1 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	1.8 %	0.9 %	8.8 %	15.0 %
India	10.2 %	0.4 %	1.1 %	0.2 %	1.1 %	9.1 %	17.4 %
Great Britain	9.2 %	0.0 %	1.2 %	0.3 %	4.0 %	5.8 %	11.2 %
Japan	8.0 %	0.0 %	2.5 %	2.5 %	2.0 %	6.5 %	8.4 %
Germany	7.3 %	0.0 %	1.8 %	1.8 %	1.5 %	4.8 %	9.1 %
Canada	7.1 %	0.0 %	1.1 %	0.8 %	2.4 %	6.1 %	7.9 %
All Others	20.5 %	2.3 %	4.0 %	4.5 %	4.7 %	18.0 %	23.5 %
Imm. Households	24.5 %	2.3 %	4.5 %	5.7 %	4.9 %	21.8 %	28.8 %
Native Households	16.3 %	1.6 %	3.9 %	5.4 %	4.6 %	13.4 %	16.6 %
Immigrant Avg. Payment Amt.[1]	$9,104	$4,164	$6,457	$1,817	-	$7,524	$1,928
Native Avg. Payment Amt.[1]	$9,327	$3,120	$5,550	$1,605	-	$7,880	$1,701

[1] Average is for only those who receive payments and does not include public housing.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

occupations. By itself, this does not necessarily mean that immigrants have lowered the wages or increased unemployment in these occupations. What it is does mean, however, is that any negative effect from immigration will likely fall on the 25 million native-born workers who already have the lowest wages and the highest unemployment. Table 10 also shows that 40 percent of native-born blacks work in high-immigrant occupations, compared to only 22 percent of whites. This means that blacks are much more likely to be affected by any decline in wages or benefits resulting from immigrant-induced increases in the supply of labor.

Self Employment

One of the most common perceptions of immigrants is that they are uniquely or distinctly entrepreneurial. Table 11 examines the self-employment rates of immigrants and natives, ranked by sending country. Consistent with other research, Table 11 shows that immigrants and natives exhibit remarkably similar levels of entrepreneurship. The table shows that about 10 percent of immigrants and 11 percent of natives are self-employed. Turning to self-employment income reported at the bottom of Table 11, we see that the average self-employment income (revenue minus expenses) for both immigrants and natives is very similar. While immigrants overall are not more entrepreneurial than natives, immigrants from some countries are significantly more likely than natives to be self-employed. Those from Korea, Iran, Italy, Pakistan, Canada, Russia and Japan are more likely to be self-employed than natives. Overall, entrepreneurship is neither lacking nor a distinguishing characteristic of the nation's immigrants. If one removed immigrants from the data, the overall rate of self-employment in the United States would be virtually unchanged. Therefore,

Table 15. Immigrants Without Health Insurance

	Percent	Number (Thsnds.)
Guatemala	55.8 %	227
El Salvador	53.7 %	466
Mexico	53.4 %	5,157
Honduras	50.7 %	146
Pakistan	47.2 %	117
Ecuador	44.7 %	161
Haiti	40.9 %	233
Korea	36.2 %	274
Colombia	35.4 %	191
Dominican Republic	29.9 %	195
Jamaica	28.0 %	149
Vietnam	21.4 %	175
Poland	21.0 %	99
China	20.7 %	300
Cuba	19.3 %	177
India	18.2 %	237
Ukraine	17.3 %	44
Japan	17.3 %	76
Iran	13.1 %	37
Russia	11.8 %	60
Philippines	11.2 %	160
Great Britain	9.8 %	59
Canada	9.0 %	64
Italy	8.4 %	34
Germany	6.9 %	44
All Others	26.7 %	1,961
All Immigrants	33.4 %	10,843
Natives	12.2 %	30,364
Immigrants 18 and Over	33.1 %	9,728
Natives 18 and Over	12.8 %	22,970
Children of Immigrants (Under 18)[1]	23 %	3,090
Children of Natives (Under 18)[2]	9.2 %	5,419
Immigrants and Their U.S.-Born Children	29.9 %	12,818
Natives and Their Children	11.9 %	28,389
Total Population	14.6 %	41,207

[1] Includes all children (under 18) of immigrant mothers, including those born in the United States.
[2] Includes only the children (under 18) of natives. The U.S.-born children of immigrants are not included.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one simply must look elsewhere to make an argument for or against current immigration.

Poverty

Based on the March 2002 CPS, 16.1 percent of immigrants compared to 11.1 percent of natives lived in poverty in 2001 (poverty statistics are based on annual income in the year prior to the survey). Like the income figures discussed above, over time immigrants do make significant progress. The poverty rate is 19.9 percent for immigrants who indicated they entered between 1990 to 2002, 13.8 percent for 1980s immigrants, and 11.7 percent for 1970s immigrants. Table 12 reports poverty rates for persons from the top-25 immigrant-sending countries. The data indicate that there is an enormous variation in poverty rates among immigrants from different countries. For example, the 25.8 percent poverty rate for Dominicans is more than five times that of persons from Poland or the Philippines. The last column in Table 12 shows the proportion of persons 21 years of age and older from each country who have not completed high school. These educational data indicate that those countries that have the highest percentage of adults without a high school education also tend to have the highest poverty rates.

The higher incidence of poverty among immigrants as a group has significantly increased the overall size of the population living in poverty. Immigrants accounted for almost 16 percent of all persons living in poverty. While this is a large percentage, it would be even larger if the U.S.-born children (under age 18) of immigrants, who are included in the poverty figures for natives, are counted with their parents. The poverty rate for children reflects their parents' income, therefore it is reasonable to view poverty among the U.S.-born young children of immigrants as attributable to their immigrant parents. The bottom portion of Table 12 shows that the poverty rate for immigrants and their U.S.-born children together is 17.6 percent.

Of the 25.4 million natives living in poverty, 2.3 million (9 percent) are the U.S.-born children (under 18) of immigrant mothers. If the native-born children of immigrants are excluded, poverty among natives drops from 11.1 percent to 10.6 percent. And if the 5.2 million immigrants in poverty are also excluded, along with their U.S.-born children, the overall number of people living in poverty drops by 7.5 million. This means that immigrants and their U.S.-born children account for 22.8 percent of the 32.9 million people living in poverty in the United States.

Table 16. Immigration's Contribution to the School-Age Population[1]

	School-age (5-17) Pop.		Young Children (0-4)	
	Percent with Immigrant Mothers	Number with Immigrant Mothers (thousands)	Percent with Immigrant Mothers	Number with Immigrant Mothers (thousands)
1) Calif.	44.6 %	3,246	43.5 %	1,132
2) Texas	25.4 %	1,126	26.1 %	464
3) N.Y.	28.1 %	936	25.1 %	309
4) Fla.	25.6 %	744	25.7 %	262
5) N.J.	23.6 %	330	27.1 %	130
6) Ill.	14.5 %	328	16.9 %	140
7) Ariz.	29.2 %	314	30.0 %	137
8) Md.	22.5 %	247	19.9 %	65
9) Va.	12.7 %	176	14.7 %	70
10) Mass.	15.6 %	155	16.2 %	63
11) Colo.	17.5 %	153	19.9 %	63
Entire Country	18.3 %	9,726	19.2 %	3,733

[1] Values have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Table 17. Characteristics of Immigrants and Natives by Region and Selected States

	Educational Attainment[1]		In or Near Poverty[2]				Without Health Insurance				Households Receiving Welfare[3]			
	Percent Without a H.S. Diploma		Immigrants and Their Children[4]		Natives and Their Children		Immigrants and Their Children[4]		Natives and Their Children		Immigrant-Headed Households		Native-Headed Households	
	Immigrants	Natives	Percent	Number (Thousands)	Percent	Number (Thousands)	Percent	Number (Thousands)	Percent	Number (Thousands)	Percent	Number (Thousands)	Percent	Number (Thousands)
Northeast	**24.9 %**	**12.2 %**	**37.5 %**	**3,465**	**24.9 %**	**10,923**	**24.7 %**	**12,291**	**9.3 %**	**4,108**	**26.7 %**	**893**	**17.6 %**	**3,144**
N.Y	25.4 %	13.0 %	40.3 %	1,984	28.2 %	3,911	28.5 %	1,407	10.9 %	1,509	31.9 %	564	21.1 %	1,169
N.J	23.0 %	11.3 %	33.8 %	644	21.1 %	1,380	25.3 %	483	9.5 %	626	16.9 %	115	13.3 %	344
Mass.	25.8 %	11.4 %	33.7 %	323	22.3 %	1,191	15.6 %	151	6.9 %	370	28.9 %	105	18.3 %	407
Midwest	**27.9 %**	**11.6 %**	**33.6 %**	**1,463**	**25.2 %**	**14,967**	**21.8 %**	**950**	**9.9 %**	**5,890**	**16.2 %**	**238**	**14.8 %**	**3,603**
Ill.	30.4 %	11.4 %	33.0 %	560	25.0 %	2,650	26.6 %	452	11.5 %	1,224	15.8 %	89	16.1 %	689
South	**34.9 %**	**16.3 %**	**46.5 %**	**5,651**	**31.8 %**	**28,062**	**35.7 %**	**4,346**	**14.0 %**	**12,366**	**21.2 %**	**811**	**17.5 %**	**6,172**
Fla.	31.0 %	12.7 %	45.1 %	1,697	31.3 %	3,925	31.8 %	1,199	13.2 %	1,658	23.0 %	301	14.5 %	779
Texas	50.3 %	15.4 %	58.3 %	2,469	30.8 %	5,177	45.1 %	1,917	18.1 %	3,043	25.2 %	305	14.5 %	913
Ga.	31.6 %	16.2 %	43.3 %	359	31.1 %	2,371	37.1 %	235	14.9 %	1,142	15.1 %	32	14.7 %	436
West	**38.3 %**	**9.1 %**	**48.2 %**	**8,208**	**25.9 %**	**12,239**	**30.7 %**	**5,232**	**12.7 %**	**6,025**	**28.1 %**	**1,344**	**14.8 %**	**2,737**
Calif.	39.0 %	9.1 %	47.3 %	6,643	24.5 %	5,335	30.5 %	3,860	13.1 %	2,858	29.8 %	1,055	14.2 %	1,191
Ariz.	39.2 %	10.0 %	57.8 %	691	28.1 %	1,156	33.1 %	396	13.4 %	554	22.1 %	71	13.0 %	210
Colo.	45.9 %	8.3 %	51.9 %	304	21.6 %	823	37.4 %	220	13.4 %	467	19.7 %	30	10.0 %	154
Nation	**33.0 %**	**13.0 %**	**43.9 %**	**18,788**	**27.7 %**	**66,191**	**29.9 %**	**12,818**	**11.9 %**	**28,389**	**24.5 %**	**3,286**	**16.3 %**	**15,656**

[1] Persons 21 years of age and older.
[2] In or near poverty defined as under 200 percent of the official poverty threshold.
[3] Includes AFDC/TANF, General Assistance, food stamps, SSI, public/subsidized housing, and Medicaid.
[4] Includes U.S.-born children (under 18) of immigrant mothers.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include personsl iving in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Among persons under age 18 living in poverty, 26.6 percent are the children of immigrants.

In addition to poverty, Table 12 also reports the percentage of immigrants and natives living in or near poverty, with near poverty defined as income less than 200 percent of the poverty threshold. As is the case with poverty, near poverty is much more common among immigrants rather than natives. Table 12 shows that 41.5 percent of immigrants compared to 28.7 percent of natives live in or near poverty. Among the children of immigrants (under 18), 53.2 percent live in or near poverty, in contrast to 34.8 percent of the children of natives. If the native-born children of immigrants are excluded from the figures for natives, the rate of poverty/near poverty among natives drops from 28.7 percent to 27.7 percent. The rate of poverty/near poverty for immigrants and their U.S.-born children is almost 44 percent. If the 13.5 million immigrants in or near poverty are excluded, along with their U.S.-born children (5.33 million), then the overall number of people living in or near poverty in the United States drops by 18.8 million. This means that immigrants and their U.S.-born children account for 22.1 percent of the poor and near poor in the United States.

Welfare Use

Table 13 shows the percentage of immigrant- and native-headed households in which at least one member of the household receives public assistance (including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and state-administered general assistance programs); Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which is for low-income elderly and disabled persons; Food Stamps; Medicaid (health insurance for those with low incomes); and subsidized or government-owned housing. Table 13 indicates that even after the 1996 welfare reforms, which curtailed eligibility for some immigrants, immigrant welfare use remains higher than that of natives for most programs and entering cohorts after 1970. In fact, the year of entry data suggest that in some cases immigrant welfare use actually rises over time as they "assimilate" into the welfare system.

As was the case with lower income and higher poverty rates, the higher welfare use rates by immigrant households are at least partly explained by the large proportion of immigrants with few years of schooling. Less-educated people tend to have lower incomes and higher levels of unemployment and poverty. Therefore, it is not surprising that immigrant use of welfare programs is significantly higher than that of natives.

While immigrants' welfare use is higher than natives', Table 13 shows that most households, immigrant or native, do not use means-tested programs. On the other hand, even though most of the population does not use welfare, for 2001 the total costs of just the first four programs listed in Table 13 was more than $90 billion, and Medicaid alone costs an additional $210 billion. Moreover, there are other means-tested programs not listed in the table that are

Table 18. Top 10 Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas with the Largest Immigrant Populations (Thsnds.)

CSMA	No. of Immigrants	Percent Immigrant	1990-99 Immigrants	2000-02 Immigrants
New York	5,325	25.4 %	2,037	462
Los Angeles	5,151	30.4 %	1,658	376
San Francisco	1,954	28.5 %	850	149
Miami	1,533	40.1 %	517	168
Chicago	1,316	15.0 %	561	114
Washington-Baltimore	1,219	15.6 %	542	175
Dallas	1,003	17.4 %	514	121
Houston	776	15.5 %	325	84
Boston	765	13.1 %	283	116
Philadelphia	531	8.4 %	188	46
Entire Country	32,454	11.5 %	12,449	3,330

For a list of the counties that comprise each metro area please see http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/metro-city/99mfips.txt
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2002 Current Population Survey, the Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

linked to those reported in Table 13. For example, 15 percent of immigrant households reported having at least one child receiving subsidized school lunches, compared to only 6 percent of native households. Finally, there is the question of whether native use of welfare is the proper yardstick by which to measure immigrants. Some may reasonably argue that because immigration is supposed to benefit the United States, our admission criteria should, with the exception of refugees, select only those immigrants who are self-sufficient.

In addition to welfare programs, Table 13 reports eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Persons receiving the EITC pay no federal income tax and instead receive cash assistance from the government based on their earnings and family size. The figures for the EITC probably overstate receipt of the EITC for both immigrants and natives because they are imputed by the Census Bureau based on income and family size. All persons who file a return should receive the EITC — the IRS will process it automatically for you if you qualify. Even illegal aliens can receive the EITC.[9] With an annual cost of over $30 billion, the EITC is the nation's largest means-tested cash assistance program for workers with low incomes. Table 13 shows that eligibility for the EITC among immigrant-headed households is almost double the rate of natives.

While on the whole immigrant households have higher welfare use rates, this is not true for immigrants from all countries. Table 14 shows that immigrants from those countries with higher education levels tend to have lower welfare use rates. From the list of countries in Table 14, it is also clear that refugee-sending countries, such as Russia and Vietnam, tend to have higher rates of welfare use because, as refugees, they have greater access to welfare programs. On the other hand, Mexican and Dominican households have welfare use rates that are as high or higher than Russian or Vietnamese immigrants, and virtually none of these immigrants are refugees. In fact if one excludes the primary refugee-sending countries, the share of immigrant households receiving welfare does drop, but only from 24.5 to 24.1 percent. Thus, the higher rate of welfare use by immigrants overall is not caused by immigrants admitted for humanitarian reasons.

In addition to being more likely to receive welfare overall, the average payments received by immigrant households on public assistance, SSI, or food stamps is larger than those of natives. However, this is not true for Medicaid. The actuarial value of Medicaid is lower for immigrant households ($7,524) using the program than for native households ($7,880). This partly reflects the fact that in some immigrant households it is only the U.S.-born children who are eligible for Medicaid. In low-income native households, on the other hand, all members are typically eligible. However, it is very important to realize that the somewhat higher dollar value for native households using Medicaid is only for those who make use of the program. If the costs of the program are averaged out over all immigrant households, then the average cost of Medicaid received by immigrants is $1,935, significantly higher than the $1,375 for native households. This is because, as the table shows, immigrants are much more likely to receive the program in the first place. Thus the slightly lower average value for immigrant households using Medicaid is not enough to offset their much higher use rates.

This is also true for the combined value of the four programs (including Medicaid) for which data are available; the costs of public/subsidized housing is not included. The $9,104 received by immigrant households is lower than the $9,327 received by natives. However, because only 16.3 percent of native households receive welfare, compared to 24.5 percent of immigrant households, the average value of welfare received by immigrant households is $2,425 compared to $1,728 for natives. In other words, immigrant households' use of major welfare programs is 50 percent higher than that of natives — 24.5 percent versus 16.3

Table 19. Distribution of Immigrants and Natives Across Central Cities, Suburban, and Rural Areas (Pct.)[1]

	Natives	Immigrants
Central Cities	25.6	43.1
Suburbs[2]	50.8	50.7
Rural Areas	23.7	6.1

[1] Includes only persons for whom central-city/surban/rural data was reported. This information was not reported for 14 percent of persons in public-use data.
[2] Metro areas outside of central cities.
Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of the March 2002 CPS. The Survey does not include persons living in "group quarters" such as prisons and nursing homes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

percent. However, the value of what immigrants actually receive is only 40 percent higher than that of natives — $2,425 versus $1,728. The large share of immigrant households who continue to use means-tested programs indicates that if the intent of welfare reform was to save American taxpayers money or to reduce immigrant dependence on the government, then the goal has largely been unmet.

Health Insurance

According to the Census Bureau, since 1989 the population without health insurance has grown by 7.8 million and stood at 41.2 million in 2001. (Figures for 2001 are based on the March 2002 CPS.) This growth has been driven largely by immigration. Immigrants who arrived after 1989 account for 6.9 million or 77 percent of the growth in the uninsured. Moreover, there where nearly 600,000 children born to post-1990 immigrants who lack insurance, meaning that new immigrants and their U.S.-born children accounted for over 95 percent of the growth in the uninsured population. Thus, it is reasonable to say that the nation's health insurance crisis is being caused by our immigration policy.

Table 15 reports the percentage of immigrants and natives who were uninsured for all of 2001. The table shows that lack of health insurance is a significant problem for immigrants from many different countries, including countries that tend to have lower poverty rates and higher education levels. The lower portion of Table 15 reports the percentage of immigrants and their U.S.-born children (under 18) who are uninsured. Almost 30 percent of immigrants and their children lack health insurance, compared to 12 percent of natives. The large percentage of immigrants and their children without insurance has significantly increased the overall size of the uninsured population. Immigrants and their U.S.-born children account for 12.8 million or almost 31 percent of uninsured persons in the country, double their 15.2 percent of the share of the overall population. The high percentage of immigrants without health insurance is even more striking when one recalls from Table 13 that immigrant households were more likely to use Medicaid. The low rate of insurance coverage associated with immigrants is primarily explained by their much lower levels of education. Because of the limited value of their labor in an economy that increasingly demands educated workers, many immigrants hold jobs that do not offer health insurance, and their low incomes make it very difficult for them to purchase insurance on their own.

A larger uninsured population cannot help but strain the resources of those who provide services to the uninsured already here. Moreover, Americans with insurance have to pay higher premiums as health care providers pass along some of the costs of treating the uninsured to paying customers. Taxpayers also are affected as federal, state, and local governments struggle to provide care to the growing ranks of the uninsured. There can be no doubt that by dramatically increasing the size of the uninsured population, our immigration policy has wide-ranging effects on the nation's entire healthcare system.

School-Age Children

In the last few years, a good deal of attention has been focused on the dramatic increase in enrollment experienced by many school districts across the country. All observers agree that this growth has strained the resources of many school districts. While it has been suggested that this increase is the result of the children of baby boomers reaching school age (the "baby boom echo"), it is clear from the CPS that immigration policy accounts for the dramatic increase in school enrollment. Table 16 shows that there are 9.7 million school-age children of immigrants (ages 5 to 17) in the United States, accounting for 18.3 percent of the total school age population. While fewer than one-third of these children are immigrants themselves, the use of public education by the U.S.-born children of immigrants is a direct consequence of their parents having been allowed into the country. The children of immigrants account for such a large percentage of the school-age population because a higher proportion of immigrant women are in their childbearing years, and immigrants tend to have more children than natives. In addition, the effect of immigration on public schools will be even larger in the coming years because 19.3 percent of children approaching school age have immigrant mothers.

Table 16 also shows that immigration has significantly increased the school-age population in all of the top immigrant-receiving states. Of course, a dramatic increase in enrollment may not create a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

problem for public education if tax revenue increases proportionately. But as we have seen, immigrants generally have lower incomes than natives, so their tax contributions are unlikely to entirely offset the costs they impose on schools. This is especially true because of the higher costs associated with teaching children whose first language is not English.

The absorption capacity of American public education is clearly an important issue that needs to be taken into account when formulating a sensible immigration policy. Table 16 suggests that the failure to consider this question may have significant consequences for America's schools.

Immigrant Characteristics by State

Table 17 reports characteristics for immigrants by region of the country and for selected states. The first two columns report the percentage of adult immigrants and natives who lack a high school education. The table shows that in every part of the country the share of adult immigrants without a high school education is significantly higher than that of natives. The largest gap is found in Western states, where more than four times as many immigrants as natives are high school dropouts as natives. This huge gap has enormous implications for the social and economic integration of immigrants because, as already noted, there is no single better predictor of one's economic and social status than education.

The next four columns in the table report the percentage and number of immigrants and their U.S.-born children (under 18) and natives and their children who live in or near poverty. Immigrants and their U.S.-born children have much higher rates of poverty and near poverty than natives in all parts of the country. As a share of all persons in or near poverty, immigrants and their children account for more than one-half (55 percent) of the poor and near poor in California and roughly one-third in New York, New Jersey, Florida, Texas, and Arizona.

Turning to health insurance coverage by state, Table 17 shows a similar pattern to poverty. Immigrants and their U.S.-born children (under 18) are significantly more likely than natives to be uninsured in every region of the country. The impact of immigration on the overall size of the uninsured population in some states can only be described as enormous. In California, 57 percent of the uninsured are immigrants or their U.S.-born children. As Table 17 shows, if immigrants and their children are not counted in California, the uninsured rate would be 13.1 percent in that state — precisely the rate for natives. But, because of immigration the actual state uninsured rate is 20 percent, making it one of the highest in the country. In New York, immigrants and their children represent nearly half (48 percent) of the uninsured; in Florida, 42 percent; in Texas, 39 percent; in New Jersey, 44 percent; in Illinois, 27 percent; in Massachusetts, 29 percent; and in Arizona, 42 percent.

The last section of Table 17 shows the percentage of immigrant and native households using at least one of the major welfare programs. Not surprisingly, with the exception of Illinois, immigrant household use of welfare is higher than that of natives in every region or state. As a result of their higher use rates, immigrant households account for a very significant percentage of the welfare caseloads in these states. In California, for example, immigrant households account for 47 percent of all households using at least one major welfare program; in New York, it's a third and in Florida, Texas, New Jersey, and Arizona immigrant households account for at least a fourth of all households receiving welfare.

Although not included in the table, another important measure of immigrant integration is citizenship. The citizenship for immigrants 18 years of age and older is as follows: in New York, 45 percent of adult immigrants are citizens and they comprise 13.6 percent of eligible voters; in New Jersey, 40.3 percent are citizens and they comprise 10.2 percent of eligible voters; in Massachusetts, 37.2 percent are citizens and they comprise 6.2 percent of eligible voters; in Illinois, 40 percent are citizens and they comprise 5.8 percent of eligible voters; in Florida, 43.8 percent are citizens and they comprise 11.1 percent of eligible voters; in Texas, 30.7 percent are citizens and they comprise 6.3 percent of voters; in Georgia, 34.2 percent are citizens and they comprise 2.6 percent of eligible voters; in California, 38.4 percent are citizens and they comprise 16.3 of eligible voters; in Arizona, 33.3 percent are citizens and they comprise 7.5 percent of eligible voters; and in Colorado, 25.6 percent are citizens and they comprise 3.2 percent of eligible voters. In the nation as a whole, 39.2 percent of immigrants 18 and older are citizens and they comprise 6.0 percent of all eligible voters. It should be noted that there is strong evidence that immigrants tend to overstate their citizenship in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

surveys such as the CPS. Thus, the above figures probably overstate the share of immigrants who are citizens and their percentage of the total electorate.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas

Table 18 reports figures for the nation's top 10 immigrant-receiving Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (CMSA). While the Los Angeles and New York CMSAs have the largest immigrant populations, the Miami CMSA ranks first in terms of the percentage of immigrants. These 10 metropolitan areas account for nearly 59 percent of all immigrants living in the United States, but only 31 percent of the nation's entire population. These cities continue to attract a large share of new immigrants. Of immigrants who arrived 1990-2002, 59 percent settled in these 10 CMSAs. Immigration has added significantly to the size of the population in all 10 CMSAs. Consider the case of the Washington-Baltimore CMSA: The more than 700,000 immigrants who arrived between 1990 and 2002 accounted for virtually all of the population growth over the last 12 years in that metro area. For communities in these metropolitan areas concerned about congestion, traffic, and sprawl, the massive increase in population created by U.S. immigration policy almost certainly has a direct bearing on these issues.

Table 19 examines the distribution of immigrants and natives between the nation's central cities, suburban, and rural areas. With 43.1 percent of immigrants living in the nation's central cities compared to 25.6 percent of natives, immigrants are clearly much more likely than natives to live in central cities. But contrary to the general impression, most immigrants do not live in the nation's central cities. In fact, immigrants are just as likely as natives to live in the suburbs. As Table 19 shows, the primary difference between the two groups is that natives are much more likely to live in rural areas while immigrants are more likely to live in central cities. The large number of immigrants who live in suburban areas may be a positive sign that immigrants are successfully integrating into American society and obtaining a middle class standard of living. On the other hand, it is in suburban areas where the problems of sprawl and congestion are most acutely felt. Thus, the nearly 16.5 million immigrants who have settled in suburbia are likely to have contributed to these problems.

Conclusion

While immigration continues to be the subject of intense national debate, with 1.5 million immigrants arriving each year and half of post-1970 immigrants and their U.S.-born children living in or near poverty and one-third having no health insurance, immigration is creating enormous challenges for the nation's schools, health care system, and physical infrastructure. Setting aside the lower socio-economic status of immigrants, no nation has ever attempted to incorporate more than 33 million newcomers into its society. Whatever one thinks of contemporary immigration, it is critically important to understand that its effect on America represents a choice. Selection criteria can be altered, as can the total number of people allowed into the country legally. Moreover, the level of resources devoted to reducing illegal immigration can also be reduced or increased. The goal of this *Backgrounder* has been to provide information about the impact of immigration on American society to better inform the policy discussion about what kind of immigration policy should be adopted in the future. If there is no change in immigration policy, it is almost certain that at least 15 million new legal and illegal immigrants will settle in the United States in this decade alone. Thus immigration's impact will continue to grow if current trends are allowed to continue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

End Notes

[1] The survey is considered such an accurate source of information on the foreign-born because, unlike the decennial census, each household in the CPS receives an in-person interview from a Census Bureau employee. The 217,000 persons in the Survey, 23,000 of whom are immigrants, are weighted to reflect the actual size of the total U.S. population.

[2] The definition of foreign-born in this study is the same as that used by the Census Bureau. The foreign-born are persons living in the United States who were not U.S. citizens at birth. This includes persons who are naturalized American citizens, legal permanent residents (green card holders), illegal aliens, and people living in the United States on long-term temporary visas such as students or guest workers. It does not include those born abroad of American citizen parents.

[3] We add the 600,000 foreign-born individuals living in group quarters to the 32.5 million in the March 2002 CPS so that we can make meaningful comparisons with the 2000 Census. The 600,000 figure is a very conservative estimate of the foreign-born population missed by the CPS. The 2000 Census, for example, found 1.1 million more foreign-born individuals, than the (reweighted) March 2000 CPS. This indicates that the CPS may miss more than one million foreign-born individuals. See Census Bureau publication P23-206 "Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2000" (page 67) for a discussion of the difference in population universes of the Census and CPS and their implications for coverage of the foreign-born. Also see Census Bureau Population Division Working Paper No. 66 available at http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0066.html#tota. (Appendix A has comparison of 2000 Census and the March 2000 reweighted CPS).

[4]Based on comparison of the 2000 Census with the March 2002 Census Bureau estimate of resident population, which can be found at http://eire.census.gov/popest/data/national/tables/NA-EST2001-04.php

[5]See Robert Warren and Ellen Percy Kraly, 1985, "The Elusive Exodus: Emigration form the United States." Occasional Paper #8. Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C.

[6]This figures refers to persons aged 18 or older who worked full-time hours for at least part of 2001. If part-time workers are also included, then immigrants comprise a somewhat smaller share of the labor force.

[7]The Census Bureau has actually prepared estimates on the share of the total U.S. population that will be of working age with or without immigration. The Bureau states that immigration is a "highly inefficient" means for increasing the proportion of the population who are workers in the long run. According to the report, if immigration remains high, 60 percent of the population will be of working-age in 2050, compared to 58 percent if there is no immigration. See "Methodology and Assumptions for the Population Projections of the United States: 1999 to 2100," Population Division. U.S. Bureau of the Census. Working Paper No. 38. Frederick W. Hollmann, Tammany J. Mulder, and Jeffrey E. Kallan. Table E (page 29) shows the various migration assumptions used in the Census Bureau's population projections. Table F (page 29) reports the results of these assumptions.

[8] There are a number of specific occupations included in the upper portion of Table 10 that do have a large concentration of immigrants, such as medical doctor. The effect of immigrants on these specific occupations is likely to be significant.

[9] For a full discussion of how illegal aliens are able to take advantage of the EITC, see the recent CIS *Backgrounder* "Giving Cover to Illegal Aliens: IRS Tax ID Numbers Subvert Immigration Law," by Marti Dinerstein. Available online at www.cis.org/articles/2002/back1202.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #6117
WASHINGTON, DC

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Center for Immigration Studies
1522 K Street NW, Suite 820
Washington, DC 20005-1202
(202) 466-8185
center@cis.org
www.cis.org

Backgrounder

Immigrants in the United States — 2002

A Snapshot of America's Foreign-Born Population

An analysis by the Center for Immigration Studies of the Current Population Survey (CPS) collected in March of this year by the Census Bureau indicates that 33.1 million immigrants (legal and illegal) live in the United States, an increase of two million just since the last Census. The March CPS includes an extra-large sample of minorities and is considered one of the best sources for information on persons born outside of the United States — referred to as foreign-born by the Census Bureau. For the purposes of this report, foreign-born and immigrant are used synonymously. The questions asked in the CPS are much more extensive than those in the decennial census, and therefore it can be used to provide a detailed picture of the nation's population, including information about welfare use, health insurance coverage, poverty rates, entrepreneurship, and many other characteristics. The purpose of this *Backgrounder* is to examine immigration's impact on the United States so as to better inform the debate over what kind of immigration policy should be adopted in the future.

13-02